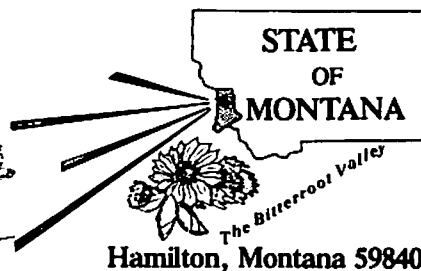
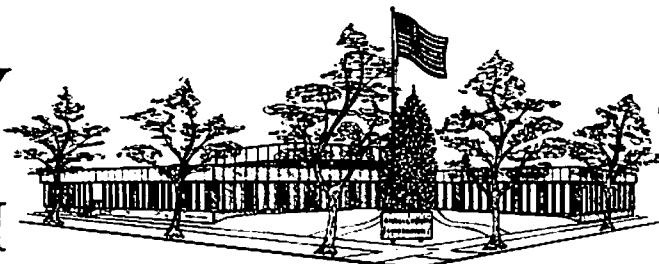


COUNTY OF RAVALLI



Ravalli County Commissioners
215 S. 4th Street, Suite A
Hamilton, MT. 59840
406-375-6500
Fax 406-375-6507

February 23, 2007

RE: Letter of Support for Bitterroot Irrigation District --(BRID Canal Funding)

To Whom It May Concern:

The Bitterroot Irrigation District (BRID Canal) serves over 1400 water users through irrigation ditch delivery from the southern end of the valley at Lake Como to the northern end of the county at the Eagle Watch area. This water delivery is approximately 72 miles in length.

Ravalli County strives to conserve, protect and encourage the use of agricultural land for the production of food and other agricultural products. Both ranching and farming are integral elements for our continued vitality, and viability of the County's history, economy, landscape, open space and tradition.

The BRID Canal is a critical infrastructure for Ravalli County. If the BRID Canal were to fail, the losses in crop production would total into the millions of dollars each year. Any siphon failure during the irrigation season would be devastating to our agricultural producers.


The BRID Canal is critical to many domestic wells as it is an important source of aquifer recharge to the lands east of the Bitterroot River. Any long term failure would have a severe impact on our wetlands and wildlife habitat.

We encourage the federal appropriations committee to support funding for the construction of two new siphons for the BRID Canal.

Sincerely,

- Absent -

Greg Chilcott, Chairman


Howard W. Lyons, Member


Alan Thompson, Member